

Notice to public water systems

All water works brass and water meters must be ANSI/NSF 61 certified

In Idaho, if you are a public water system, the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems require that all materials used to construct public drinking water systems (which come in contact with drinking water) must be ANSI/NSF 61 certified. This requirement includes residential and commercial water works brass (e.g., curb stops, meter setters, etc.) and water meters.

Products with ANSI/NSF 61 certification help to reduce the amount of lead and other contaminants that get into drinking water. Lead in drinking water results primarily

Q. Is NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) the only organization that can determine whether a particular fitting or fixture meets the NSF Standard?

A. No, any organization or independent laboratory can test products against the NSF standard if the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has granted it accreditation. ANSI accredits organizations and laboratories to certify products against NSF Standard 61.

from corrosion of material containing lead installed in building plumbing such as lead solder, brass, bronze, and other alloys containing lead that comes in contact with the water.

Exposure to low levels of lead over an extended period of time can have severe health effects. Too much lead can damage a person's brain, kidneys, nervous system, and red blood cells. Those at greatest risk, even with short-term exposure, are young children and pregnant women.

Water purveyors are allowed to use up existing supplies of water works brass and water meters that are not ANSI/NSF 61 certified. DEQ will consider other exceptions on a site-specific basis. ■

■ NSF and the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems

Section 550.02 of the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems (IDAPA 58.01.08) outlines the standards for materials used in public drinking water systems:

"Materials. Materials which are used to construct public drinking water systems and which have water contact surfaces must comply with applicable AWWA standards and ANSI/NSF standard 61 or NSF standard 53 or 58, unless otherwise approved by the Department on a site specific basis. Corrosion control shall be taken into account during all aspects of public water system design."

The Idaho rules are consistent with the 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), which required the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a performance standard to govern the leaching of lead from devices intended to dispense water for human consumption. The EPA turned to the National Sanitation Foundation for measuring and certification criteria. The result was that NSF Standards 60 and 61 were approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and adopted by EPA.

Operator certification undergoes some changes

As most drinking water and wastewater operators know by now, the issuing of operator certificates (now to be called licenses) is being transferred to the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses (IBOL).

In January, DEQ issued a special "Operator Certification for Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals" publication and mailed it to all certified operators in the state. The publication explained the transition of issuing

licenses from the former Idaho Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Board to IBOL.

- ❑ If you did not receive a copy of the publication, you can contact your local regional DEQ office or go to DEQ's web site at www.deq.state.id.us/water/dwnnewsletter/h2o_opcert_0104newsletter.pdf to view a copy.
- ❑ If you have not received an operator license renewal invoice from IBOL, you may use the form labeled "License Renewal Application" found at www.idahocertificationtraining.com. This form is intended to be printed and filled out. Please follow the instructions when completing this form, and then enclose copies of supporting documentation and mail to IBOL, Owyhee Plaza, 1109 Main St., Suite 220, Boise, ID 83702-5642. IBOL can be reached at www2.state.id.us/ibol, or by e-mail at ibol@ibol.state.id.us, or by telephone (208) 334-3233. ■

February mailing

DEQ grant/loan program to mail letter of interest forms

During fiscal 2005, DEQ will award a limited number of grants and loans to eligible public drinking water systems to help them plan, design, and construct drinking water facilities. The State Fiscal Year 2005 starts July 1, 2004.

The purpose of this assistance program is to help communities identify system problems, determine how to correct them, and complete construction.

All community and nonprofit noncommunity water systems are qualified to receive grants and loans, but they must be in the fundable range of the fiscal 2005 priority list to do so.

Qualified public water systems can get on the 2005 list by completing grant and loan Letter of Interest (LOI) forms. These forms will be mailed to all qualified systems during the first week of February of 2004.

We urge you to provide the information requested in the LOI forms and to return them by the 30-day deadline. A return envelope will be provided.

DEQ staff engineers, in our six regional offices around the state, will rate and rank project based on public health and "readiness to proceed" criteria.

DEQ will begin awarding grant and loans in July of 2004. Highest rated projects will be invited to apply first. Assistance will be awarded until funding resources are exhausted.

LOI forms for wastewater grants and loan will be mailed in February. ■

Notice

Systems on quarterly coliform sample schedules

Failure to monitor on time may lead to increased monitoring and lab costs

A new procedure to ensure that systems on quarterly coliform monitoring schedules take enough samples to adequately assess the microbiological quality of their water is being implemented by DEQ in 2004. Here is how it works:

A system on quarterly monitoring that incurs two major violations (*see insert below*) will be required to monitor on a monthly basis for a total of nine months. If all nine samples are taken on schedule, the system will again be allowed to monitor on a quarterly basis.

If a quarterly system fails to monitor on schedule, up to six months could elapse before another sample is taken. This is simply not adequate to determine if the system's water is free of microbiological contamination. In addition, systems monitoring quarterly can be subject to enforcement action if a total of three major violations occur in any four consecutive quarters.

Additional required monitoring is time-consuming and expensive for both the system and the regulatory agency. This new monitoring procedure should keep a system on track before these kinds of monitoring problems occur.

Quarterly monitoring systems will receive a letter explaining this procedure from their local DEQ or Health District office. ■

■ Major Violations include the following:

- failure to monitor on schedule,
- failure to take four repeat samples following a positive routine sample,
- failure to take five samples in the month following a positive routine sample, and
- any violation of the coliform MCL.

DEQ advises systems to apply early

Deadline extensions available for revised arsenic standard

A reminder that exemption applications for the revised Arsenic Rule standard of 10 parts per billion (ppb) are available on-line at <http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/dw/arsenic.htm>. The web site contains information regarding the revised Arsenic Rule and includes exemption application forms and instructions.

An "exemption" is an extension of time (beyond the January 23, 2006 deadline), granted to a qualified water system, to come into compliance with the new arsenic standard of 10 parts per billion (ppb). An "exemption" does not mean that a system is exempt from meeting the new arsenic standard.

If your community or non-community non-transient water system is expected to exceed the new maximum contaminant level of 10 ppb in January 2006, you are encouraged to apply. A system may apply for an exemption if it meets any of the following criteria:

- ✓ The system was in operation before February 22, 2002 or if not, has no reasonable alternative source of drinking water;
- ✓ The arsenic concentration is less than 35 ppb, but over 10 ppb;
- ✓ The system has entered into an agreement to receive financial assistance, or can show that financial assistance is reasonably likely to be available during the period of the exemption;

- ✓ The system requires capital improvements, which cannot be completed by January 23, 2006;
- ✓ The system cannot make management and/or restructuring changes that would result in compliance with the new standard; or
- ✓ The system cannot obtain or develop an alternative source of water supply by the new MCL effective date of January 23, 2006.

DEQ advises qualified systems to apply early. If you have questions concerning the revised Arsenic Rule, contact Jerri Henry at Idaho DEQ at 208-373-0471. If you have questions regarding the exemption application process or need application assistance, contact Boise State University's Environmental Finance Center at 208-426-1567. ■

■ Environmental Finance Center's Telephone Number: 208-426-1567

The arsenic exemption letter and application (referred to above) went out in December to systems that have known levels of arsenic over the revised maximum contaminant level of 10 parts per billion. The telephone number, listed in the letter for the Environmental Finance Center should have read **208-426-1567**. Please make a note of the change. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Reminder to Public Water Systems

Remember . . . you must have prior DEQ approval before modifying your system

Installing equipment or making modifications to a regulated public water system requires plan and specification approval by the Idaho DEQ before installations or modifications are made.

The Department is aware that there are vendors of ready-to-install treatment systems that are installing equipment for utilities even though some water systems lack DEQ written approval. Such an action can cause a public water system to be in violation of Idaho Code §39-118 and IDAPA 58.01.08.551, which can ultimately lead to enforcement and penalties.

If you are not sure whether you need to get approval before installing equipment or making system modifications, please call your local DEQ office first. ■

Safe Drinking Water Hotline

For general information on drinking water, contact EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. The Safe Drinking Water Hotline is open Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. You can also contact EPA's Safe Drinking Water web site at www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline

Notice to systems on DEQ emergency contact list

■ Please update your emergency contact names and telephone numbers when appropriate.

As you know, in cooperation with DEQ, the Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services (BDS) conducts monthly water system telephone tests on the 10th of each month. The monthly tests are performed at 10:00 a.m. and consist of a 48-second pre-recorded message. (If the 10th falls on a weekend, then the test occurs on the following Monday.)

BDS reports that they are getting a substantial number of "non-connects" from systems that apparently have changed contact persons or telephone numbers. Since participation in the test calls is voluntary, it is the system's responsibility to keep DEQ informed of any changes.

Test messages are disseminated to all telephone numbers included on the *daytime* contact list only. BDS does not conduct the monthly tests using after-hour numbers.

The state of Idaho maintains the voluntary contact list so it can contact public drinking water systems in case of a major disaster or threat to the safety of system's drinking water. This method of contacting water utilities is known as the State Automated Warning System (SAWS).

If, as a system, you wish to be removed from the list, send an e-mail to "<mailto:jthomas@deq.state.id.us>" and ask to have your system's name taken off the call list, or write a one or two sentence letter (giving system name and PWS ID number) to the Idaho Drinking Water Program, DEQ, 1410 North Hilton, Boise, ID 83706.

If you are not on the DEQ emergency contact list and would like to be, go to our web site at www.deq.state.id.us/water/dw/form_emergency-mail.htm and fill out an interactive form and e-mail it back to DEQ according to site instructions. ■